

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY
VETERANS' RECOGNITION SUBCOMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Section 19.84, Wis. Stats., a regular meeting of the **Brown County Veterans' Recognition Subcommittee** was held on Tuesday, December 17, 2013 at 5:00 p.m., in Room 201 of the Northern Building, 305 E. Walnut Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

PRESENT: Chair Erickson, Duane Pierce, Delores Pierce, Carl Soderburg, Jim Haskins, Rosemary Desisles, Jerry Polus, Bill Kloiber

EXCUSED: Sherry Steenbock

****Running Total of Veterans' Certificates: 1503**

1. Call Meeting to Order.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bernie Erickson at 5:00 p.m.

2. Invocation by Jim Haskins.

3. Approve/Modify Agenda.

Rosemary Desisles would like Item 6 amended to read, "Honor Run Discussion".

Motion made by Rosemary Desisles, seconded by Delores Pierce to approve the agenda as amended. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. Approve or Modify Minutes of November 19, 2013.

Motion made by Jim Haskins, seconded by Duane Pierce to approve the minutes. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Any new discussion regarding Veterans' Appreciation Day at the Brown County Fair.

A discussion was held regarding inviting the POWs to the Fair. Chair Erickson felt that efforts should be made after the first of the year to get a list together of the POWs and start working on ascertaining who has a desire to attend the Fair. CVSO Jerry Polus suggested that a representative of the Fair Board be invited to the next meeting of this Subcommittee to start planning for the Fair. It was also reported that Haskins, Pierce and Koslowski have been regularly attending Fair Board meetings and the Fair seems amenable to meeting the requests of this group. It was also indicated that there was an interest in putting up a military display to run the entire duration of the Fair. Space needed for this would be approximately 12 feet by 20 feet and the Fair will advise the Subcommittee members if there would be space available for this. A discussion was held regarding having such a display monitored for the entire duration of the Fair so donated and borrowed items do not disappear. Erickson suggested looking into having the display in locked glass cabinets. CVSO Jerry Polus indicated that veterans in some other counties staff booths for the duration of the fairs to distribute information and a brief discussion was held with regard to this. Pierce suggested that if a person were to monitor the display for the full length of the Fair, that person could also distribute tickets to the Appreciation Day.

Erickson asked Carl Soderburg what the possibility would be of getting Congressman Reid Ribble to provide some sort of certificate to honor the POWs invited to the Fair. Soderburg felt that this could easily be done.

Polus reported that he had placed a call to the Air Force Band to see if they are available to play the Fair event next year and he is waiting to hear back from them. Erickson also had the name of a group of performers that may be a good choice. More discussion will be held with regard to Fair entertainment after the first of the year.

6. **Honor Run Discussion.**

Rosemary Desisles stated that the Green Bay/Fox Valley Navy Council has been formed and the idea for the run is to secure a location as quickly as possible. She noted that they want the event limited to a 5K event or less. One of the ideas that had been discussed was starting the run at the Pearly Gates or Drift Inn. Desisles was thinking that the Pearly Gates may be a good idea as there is less traffic in that area. Desisles had a poster from the Madison event that she shared with the Subcommittee. She would like to have a decision made as to where to start the event right after the first of the year. Erickson reminded her that she would have to obtain appropriate special event permits from the City or Village where the run is to take place. Other ideas for starting locations were discussed. Desisles also stated that another thing she is really looking for is people to sit on the committee for this event to help her out. She also indicated that they are thinking of having a medal for the run and she mentioned that Global Recognition may be able to assist with that. Erickson stated that he will check with the Drift Inn to see if they are interested in being involved in this and Duane Pierce will also provide information for a contact at the Pearly Gates.

7. **Report from CVSO Jerry Polus.**

Polus had two things to report on. First, tomorrow, weather permitting he will be driving to Milwaukee to meet with a representative of the Center for Veterans Issues to discuss plans for the veterans' complex that will be built on the site of the former mental health center beginning next year. Polus will provide an update of this meeting at the next Subcommittee meeting.

The other item Polus brought up was the possibility of soliciting some area businesses to raise funds for the Appreciation Day at the Fair event. One of the ideas he had was asking a company to allow their employees to wear jeans to work for a day in exchange for a donation. He thought sending a letter out on this after the first of the year would be appropriate.

Polus also stated that he had recently received several donations from outside sources and he has seen somewhat of a trend of people donating on the local level rather than to national organizations.

8. **Comments from Bill Kloiber and/or Carl Soderburg.**

Bill Kloiber did not have anything to report.

Carl Soderburg reported on the budget agreement in Congress and stated that the House passed the budget for the 2014 and 2015 fiscal year. In the Senate today they voted to end debate and vote on it and it is expected to be voted on in the Senate tomorrow. Of concern to some people is that the budget does reduce the COLA for military retirees between the ages of 40 – 62. Upon turning 62, the COLA will go back up to the normal level that all the other retirees are getting. Also, with regard to the Pentagon budget, military will get an extra \$22.5 billion dollars in 2014 and an extra \$9 billion dollars for 2015.

A discussion was also held with regard to the status of veterans obtaining veterans status on their drivers' licenses. Polus indicated that calls to his office in this regard are slowing down somewhat and he explained the process of obtaining the licenses.

9. **Report from Committee Members Present (Erickson, Desisles, Haskins, Koslowski, Maino, Ness, Pierce, Steenbock & Witkowski.**

-Bernie Erickson stated that he has had conversations recently with regard to donations coming into local agencies and he thought he might talk to Jeff Alexander or Sara Thompson about doing a news story on the benefits of giving to local organizations rather than larger national organizations where a smaller portion of donations are actually given to veterans. Polus agreed that giving locally is the best way to go because you know the money is used right here.

-Rosemary Desisles stated that she had several more thoughts with regard to the Honor Run discussed earlier such as having the run held along the River Walk downtown where traffic would not be an issue and the possibility of getting Hagermeiser Park involved. She also wondered what the thoughts would be to cutting it down to a distance of 2.5 kilometers to draw more people in. Erickson stated that the Neville Public Museum will be having a WW1 exhibit in 2014 and he thought maybe somehow this run could be tied in with that. Haskins also mentioned the possibility of having the event held at Green Isle Park.

-Jim Haskins saw on Facebook that there was a billboard in Texas thanking a vet for his service and he wondered if they could do some sort of photo billboard in Green Bay thanking a local vet for their service. Erickson stated that he has a connection that may be able to help with something like this and he will speak to this connection. Haskins also stated that Associated Bank has a "Board of Heroes" which they use to honor local veterans. Haskins also mentioned the Maino Project in which wreaths were placed on Veterans graves.

Haskins continued that in the past when Jack Krueger was the Chair of the Subcommittee he provided the Subcommittee with financial data as to the Subcommittee's account. Erickson stated that he has recently worked with the Internal Auditor on this and he will ask the Auditor to provide monthly reports to be shared with the Subcommittee.

-Duane Pierce stated that the Vietnam Veterans are doing their annual distribution of Christmas baskets on Saturday to 35 families in need. Other than that, Pierce indicated that they are in the planning stages for next years' events and he will continue to keep the Subcommittee advised in this regard.

10. **Such Other Matters as Authorized by Law.**

None.

11. **Adjourn.**

Motion made by Jim Haskins, seconded by Delores Pierce to adjourn at 5:48 p.m. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted,

Therese Giannunzio
Recording Secretary